

Mixing it up: How to Create Community in Mixed Population Buildings

DMH Housing Institute
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Panelists

Debbie Woodward, LCSW

Affordable Living for the Aging

Alicia Santiago, MSW

Affordable Living for the Aging

Walter Powell

Residential Services Supervisor

A Community of Friends

Overview

I. Bonnie Brae Senior Village

ALA

II. Selby Hotel

ACOF



Affordable Living for the Aging (ALA)

ALA provides affordable
permanent supportive housing,
shared living residences and
home-sharing for seniors.



Bonnie Brae Village Community

Los Angeles, CA



46 units

Homeless and
MHSA Eligible

45 units

Low-income



Mixed Population of Seniors 62+

ALA Philosophy



Staffing Pattern: 2.5 FTE

LCSW + MSW+ Interns

- Gerontology & mental health training
- Competent with Medicaid and Medicare
- Conversant in healthcare and substance abuse related issues



Integrated Service Model

- Voluntary
- Proactive
- Self-directed
- Flexible





Service Goals



Two Populations

**Formerly
Homeless**

(Some, chronically)

**Non-Special
Needs**

Formerly Homeless Population Profile

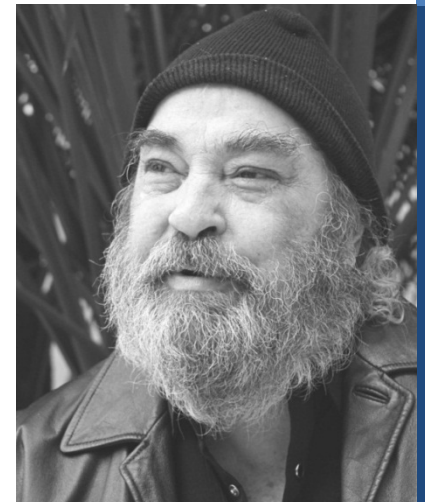
- **Average Length of Homelessness: 7 years**
- **30% have ≥ 3 chronic health conditions**

Hypertension - Arthritis - Alcohol Abuse

- **Income Level and Source**

\$836/month

SSA and SSI



Formerly Homeless Population

Mental Health Diagnoses

Major Depressive D/O w/ Anxiety

Schizophrenia – Paranoid Type

Bipolar D/O

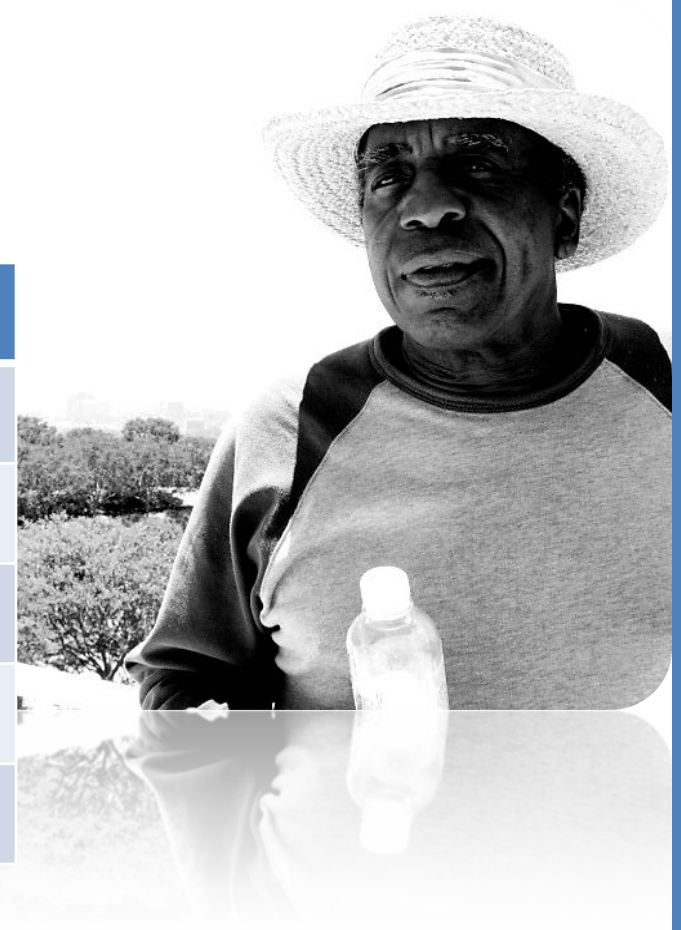
Other Characteristics

Minimal support from family or social network

Individuals in different phases of their mental illness and how this presents to the community

Formerly Homeless

	N = 40
15%	Deceased
5%	Skilled nursing facility
2%	Felony conviction (1)
2%	Abandoned unit (1)
5%	Moved (Family/other housing)



87% are Engaged in Services

75% of the original special needs tenants remain

Anniversary Date: Dec. 2010; 2 years and 6 months

Formerly Homeless Population Profile

Average Age: 69 years old

African American- 50%

Caucasion- 25%

Hispanic- 22%

Asian Pacific Islander- 3%

Non Special Needs Population Profile

Average Age: 74 years old

Korean- 63%

Hispanic- 16%

Caucasion- 11%

African American- 6%

Monolingual: 88%

Other Characteristics

- Respectful, courteous – liked by all
- Visited and supported (regularly) by family

Differences Between the Two Populations

- 1) Cultural / Language
- 2) Access to Support Networks & Family
- 3) Functional Levels
 - Emotional & Social
 - Independent Living Capacity

Challenge: Language Barrier

Implications

- 1) Events that rely on talking are challenging
 - Requires smaller, separate groups
 - Art/exercise classes more flexible
- 2) Programs are often inaccessible
 - SBSS computer
 - Memory class
 - Bring-in alternatives, Educational Presentations
- 3) Relationship building is slower

Challenge: Privacy and Stigma

“What kind of building is this? They just told me it was a building for people with disabilities – *what kind of disabilities?*”

How to talk about the Community to Tenants

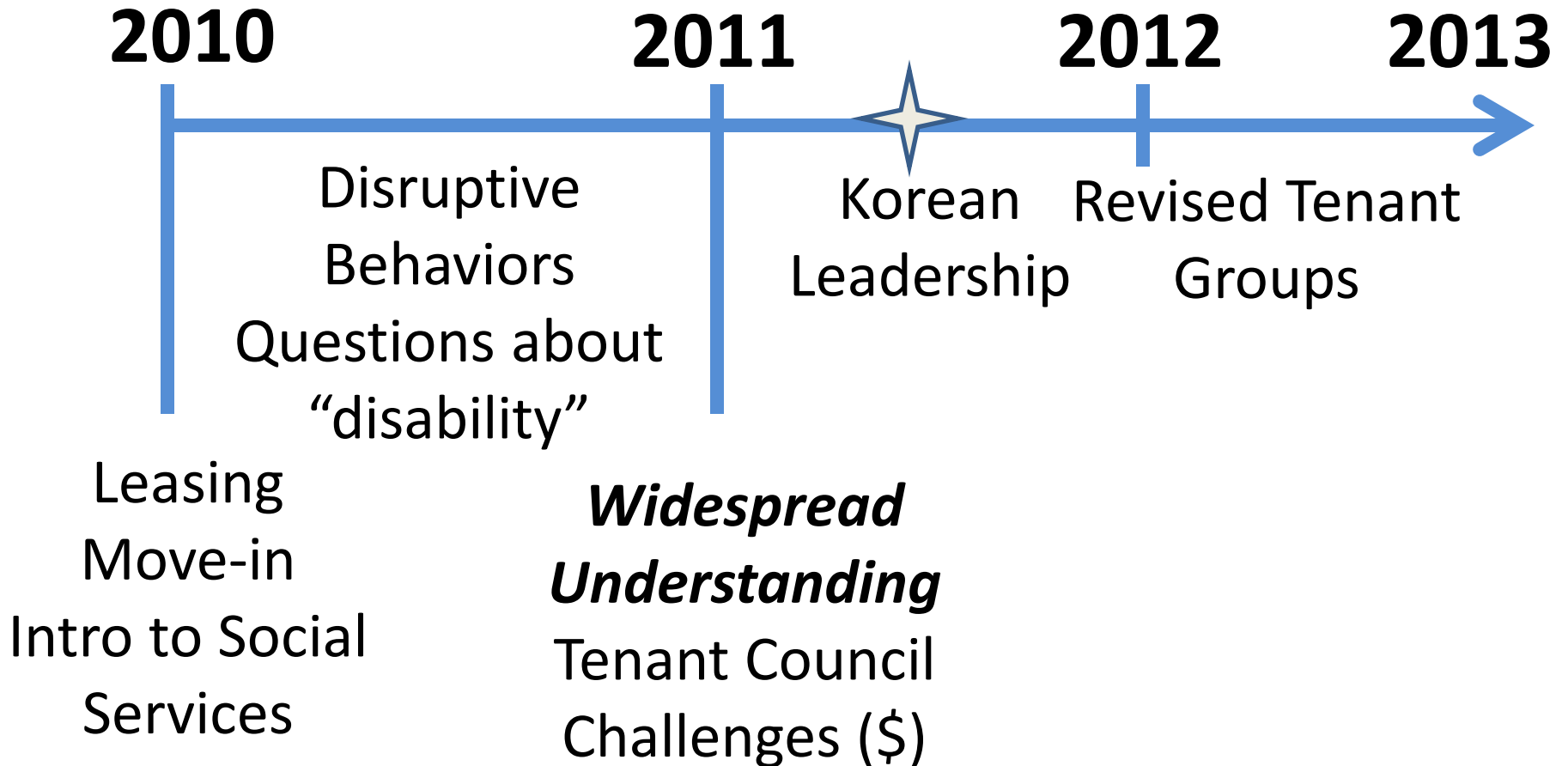
This is a building for low-income individuals,
some people have higher needs than others

- There are special requirements
- After one year, tenants know

Tenant: “Why don’t you meet with me?”

Staff: “We’re here as a resource for all.”

Timeline



Social Services' Role

First 6 months

- Answer questions
- Reassure and support tenants
- Intentionally build community

Over time the sentiment becomes...

*Good, there is someone
here to help this person.*

Strategies for Building Community

Questions to ask:

- Is there a tenant who acts as a leader?
- What can you do to support the non-special needs group?
- What activities bring everyone together? (FOOD!)
- What activities work well that are not dependent on spoken language?
- Are some activities better when integrated?
Kept separate for smaller groups?

Leverage the Strengths of Each Group

Who are the natural leaders, how can you work with them?

- Translators
- They have the trust of their peers
- “Ambassadors” for communicating major issues and gaining buy-in among tenants
- They escort other tenants to social service staff

Support the non-special need tenants

- Listen
- Be Responsive
- Hard vs. Soft Programming
- Introduce Policies that Respond to the Needs of Both Groups (Ex. Potlucks and food issue)

Support the non-special need tenants

Examples of Desired Support:

- Translations
- Voter Registration
- Emergency Database Registration – S.N.A.P.
- IHSS Paperwork
- Printing/copying/faxing
- Lifeline and Application for Utilities/Phone
- Housing Authority Questions & Paperwork

Community Building Ideas

Separate

Community Advisory
Group

Coffee Klatch

Education/Outreach
presentations in
native language

Computer Class

Integrated

Potluck Gatherings

Birthdays

Special Holiday Events

Memorial Services

Art Classes

Exercise Classes

Outings (Getty Center)

Community Building Ideas



Community Building Ideas

Bonnie Brae Village

Newsletter

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 NOVEMBER 2012

AFFORDABLE LIVING FOR THE AGING

ALA STAFF

David Grunwald, President & CEO

Vivian Ramirez, Chief Operating Officer

Rachel Caraviello, VP of Programs and Services

Christy Moody, VP, Strategic Planning & Development

Helen Hsieh, Finance & Accounting

Miriam Hall, Program Manager, Home Share Program

Yvonne Bonta, Business Development

In October Shellie said goodbye to BBV. We stopped by to chat with her one last time before she left to try to

as an adventurer. Her adventurous spirit has tasted the sharp, salty air that comes with sailboats, real estate and San Francisco (still her

story of transitions and revelations that never stops, whose deep themes are integration and humility. Life is an ongoing revelation, and

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AFFORDABLE LIVING FOR THE AGING

고명 생활지 임직원

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Miriam Hall, 프로그램 담당, 홈 셰어 프로그램

BBV의 새로운 그룹!

몇몇 입주자 분들은 이미 아는 사실이었지만, 보니브래빌리지에 새로운 그룹 및 강좌가 생겨습니다. 직원들은 강좌를 제공하기 위해 세인트 빈센트 다문화 센터와 제휴를 맺었습니다. 이러한 그룹/강좌의 지속은 여러분의 가능한 많은 그룹/강좌를 지원해주시고, 친구를 초대하셔도 됩니다! 다른 입주자분들께 소개하면 하는 환독이

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Rachel Caraviello, Vicepresidente de programas y servicios

Christy Moody, Vicepresidente planificación estratégica y desarrollo

Helen Hsieh, finanzas y contabilidad

Miriam Hall, directora de programa, programa de acciones

¡Nuevos grupos de BBV!

Algunos grupos y clases ya han empezado en Bonnie Brae Village. Personal ha escuchado sus peticiones y estamos haciendo nuestro mejor esfuerzo para ofrecer

sea posibles y no dude en invitar a un amigo! Si tienes ideas para las actividades que le gustaría ofrecer a otros residentes, háganos saber.

- Grupo de mujeres de habla a hispana
- Clase de ejercicio y movimiento de silla
- Clases de

Tenants are Seeking Community

Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Open-ended Question

What other services and activities would you like?

Free weights, cat care, gardening/window box classes, a ping pong table, Thai chi, a swimming pool, trips to Disneyland and museums, theatre trips, **events connecting neighbors**

Conclusions

- Community building takes time
- Onsite services are a necessary asset
- Make sure you're asking what kind of support people want
- Hard vs. Soft Programming
 - ✓ Soft programming is critical for building relationships between tenants and staff



Thank You

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